

**REMARKS**

This amendment is offered in reply to the office action of May 17, 2006.

In paragraph 2 of the office action, claims 1-3, and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious in view of Raasch et al. U.S. Patent No. 6,277,328 (hereinafter '328) taken with Heredia U.S. Patent No. 5,961,936 (hereinafter '936).

Claim 1 has been amended to distinguish over the '328 and '936 patents. For example, claim 1 refers to a gas mixture comprising about 1 to about 50 mg/L chlorine dioxide and the balance being a carrier gas and having about 30% to about 100% relative humidity. In contrast, neither the '328 and '936 discloses or suggests the features recited in the amended claim 1.

Claim 1 is believed to be allowable over the '328 and '936 patents. Reconsideration of rejection of claim 1 is requested.

Claims 2, 3, and 7 depending from claim 1 each recite features not disclosed or suggested in the '328 and '936 patents. Reconsideration of the § 103 rejection of claims 2, 3, and 7 is requested.

In paragraph 3 of the office action, claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious in view of the '328 patent taken with the '936 patent and further taken with Barenberg et al. U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0190273 A1 (hereinafter '273).

The deficiencies of the '328 and '936 patents are pointed out above. Moreover, the '273 application does not disclose or suggest generating chlorine dioxide gas inside a container for circulation of a gas mixture therein comprising

about 1 to about 50 mg/L chlorine dioxide and the balance being a carrier gas and having about 30% to about 100% relative humidity. Reconsideration of the rejection of claim 4 is requested.

In paragraph 4 of the office action, claim 5 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious in view of the '328 patent taken with the '936 patent further taken with '273 application and still further taken with Mayurnik et al. U.S. Patent No. 5,006,326 (hereinafter '326).

The deficiencies of the '328 patent, the '936 patent, and the '273 application are pointed out above. Furthermore, the '326 patent does not disclose or suggest a means for generating chlorine dioxide gas for circulation of a gas mixture comprising about 1 to about 50 mg/L chlorine dioxide and the balance being a carrier gas and having about 30% to about 100% relative humidity. Reconsideration of the rejection of claim 5 is requested.

In paragraph 5 of the office action claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious in view of the '328 patent taken the '936 patent in further view of Young et al. U.S. Patent No. 4,193,818 (hereinafter '818).

The inadequacies of the '328 and '936 patents are discussed above. Moreover, the '818 patent does not disclose or suggest flushing a gas mixture comprising 1 to about 50 mg/L chlorine dioxide and the balance being carrier gas and having about 30% to about 100% relative humidity using filtered air. Reconsideration of the rejection of claim 6 is requested.

The pending claims are believed to be allowable and action to that end is requested.

Applicants have added claims 16-21 and believe them to be allowable also.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K.T. Davenport', written over a horizontal line.

Kristin T. Davenport

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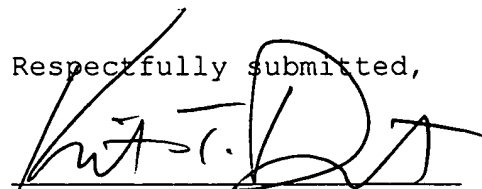
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Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K.T. Davenport', written over a horizontal line.

Kristin T. Davenport